GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3884
ANSWERED ON:24.03.2017
Food Testing Laboratories
Kambhampati Dr. Hari Babu;Patel Shri Devji Mansingram

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a scheme for setting up/upgradation of Quality Control and Food Testing Laboratories, if so, the details thereof, including number of laboratories set up
since inception of the scheme, State-wise;

(b) whether the present network of food testing laboratories is adequate to meet the growing requirement of this sector and whether existing standards of food testing in food processing industries is at par with the standards adopted by developed countries, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the Government plans to set up more laboratories in the future, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)

(a): A Central Sector Scheme for "Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country including provision of Mobile Food Testing Labs" with a total outlay of Rs. 481.95 Crore to be implemented during 2016-17 to 2018-19, has been approved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The components of the Scheme include: (i) Strengthening of State Food Testing labs; (ii) Strengthening of Referral Food Testing Labs; (iii) Support for Mobile Food labs; (iv) Capacity Building of Food Testing Laboratories; (v) Incentivising States to utilise the facilities available in Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Notified Labs; (vi) School Food & Hygiene Programme; and vii) creation of new food testing labs in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim. So far, no laboratory has been set up under the aforesaid Scheme.

(b): Adequate number of National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration of Laboratories (NABL) accredited laboratories have been notified to undertake analysis of samples in addition to State/Public Food Laboratories. Presently, there are 213 Food Testing Laboratories for testing food products as per standards prescribed under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and regulations thereunder, as per following details:-

(i) 72 State/Public food laboratories functioning under the State/ Union Territory Government;

(ii) 16 Referral Laboratories notified by the FSSAI for referral testing; and

(iii) 125 National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited private laboratories notified by FSSAI.

Standards for various food product categories have been prescribed in the Regulations under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. FSSAI benchmarks these standards with international standards.

(c): As stated in reply to part (a) above, approval has been accorded to a scheme for strengthening Food Testing System in the country.